

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A content scanning computer system for electronic documents such as emails comprising:

a) a link analyser for identifying hyperlinks in ~~document~~ content of a document;

b) means for causing a content scanner to scan objects referenced by the hyperlinks ~~[[links]]~~ identified by the link analyser and to determine whether or not the content of the document is acceptable ~~their acceptability~~ according to predefined rules, the means being operative, when an identified hyperlink ~~the link~~ is to an object external to the document and is determined by the content analyser to be acceptable, to retrieve the external object and modify the document by

b1. embedding in the document ~~[[it]]~~ or attaching to the document ~~[[it]]~~ the retrieved copy of the external object; and

b2. replacing the identified hyperlink ~~[[link]]~~ to the external object by a hyperlink ~~[[one]]~~ to the copy of the external document embedded in, or attached to, the document.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): A system according to claim 1, wherein the link analyser a) and means b) are operative to recursively process hyperlinks ~~[[links]]~~ identified in ~~[[such]]~~ external objects.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): A system according to claim 2, wherein ~~in which~~ only a maximum depth of recursion is permitted and the document is flagged as unacceptable if that limit is reached.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): A system according to claim 1, wherein acceptable retrieved copies of objects embedded in, or attached to, the document are encoded into MIME format.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): A system according to claim 1, wherein, if content of any linked-to object is determined by the content scanner to be unacceptable, the document is flagged or modified to indicate that fact.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): A method of content-scanning electronic documents such as emails comprising:

a) using a link analyser for identifying hyperlinks in the content of a document
~~content~~;

b) using a content scanner to scan objects referenced by hyperlinks ~~[[links]]~~
identified by the link analyser and to determine whether or not the content of the
document is acceptable ~~their acceptability~~ according to predefined rules, ~~the means being~~
~~operative and~~, when an identified hyperlink ~~the link~~ is to an object external to the
document and is determined by the content analyser to be acceptable, retrieving ~~to~~
~~retrieve~~ the external object and modifying ~~modify~~ the document by:

b1. embedding in the document ~~[[it]]~~ or attaching to the document ~~[[it]]~~ the
retrieved copy of the external object; and

b2. replacing the identified hyperlink ~~[[link]]~~ to the external object by a
hyperlink ~~[[one]]~~ to the copy of the external object embedded in, or attached to, the
document.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 6, wherein the
steps a) and b) are used recursively to process hyperlink ~~[[links]]~~ identified in ~~[[such]]~~
external objects.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 7, wherein ~~in~~ ~~which~~ only a maximum depth of recursion is permitted and the document is flagged as unacceptable if that limit is reached.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): A system according to claim 6, wherein acceptable retrieved copies of objects embedded in, or attached to, the document are encoded into MIME format.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A method according to claim 6, wherein, if content of any linked-to object is determined by the content scanner to be unacceptable, the document is flagged or modified to indicate that fact.

Claims 11 and 12 (Canceled).

Claim 13 (New): A computer readable medium having stored thereon instructions for causing a computer to carry out a method for content-scanning electronic documents such as emails, the method comprising:

using a link analyser to identify hyperlinks in the content of a document;

using a content scanner to scan objects referenced by hyperlinks identified by the link analyser and determining whether or not the content of the document is acceptable according to defined rules, and, when an identified hyperlink is to an object external to

the document and is determined by the content analyser to be acceptable, retrieving the external object and modifying the document by (i) embedding in the document or attaching to the document the retrieved copy of the external object; and (ii) replacing the identified hyperlink to the external object by a hyperlink to the copy of the external object embedded in, or attached to, the document.

Claim 14 (New): A computer-readable medium according to claim 13, wherein the method further comprises recursively processing hyperlinks identified in external objects.

Claim 15 (New): A computer-readable medium according to claim 14, wherein only a maximum depth of recursion is permitted and the document is flagged as unacceptable if that limit is reached.

Claim 16 (New): A computer-readable medium according to claim 13, wherein acceptable retrieved copies of objects embedded in, or attached to, the document are encoded into MIME format.

Claim 17 (New): A computer-readable medium according to claim 13, wherein, if content of any linked-to object is determined by the content scanner to be unacceptable, the document is flagged or modified to indicate that fact.

SHIPP, A.

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Claim 18 (New): A system comprising a computer-readable medium according to claim 13.